

MEMOIRS, ANECDOTES,
AND
CHARACTERS
OF THE
COURT OF LEWIS XIV.



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AND
CHARACTERS
OF THE
COURT OF LEWIS XIV.

TRANSLATED FROM
LES SOUVENIRS,
OR,
RECOLLECTIONS OF
MADAME DE CAYLUS,
Niece to MADAME DE MAINTENON:

BY

The Translator of the Life and Writings of
NINON DE L'ENCLOS. *Mrs Griffith.*

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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MEMOIRS AND ANECDOTES

AND

CHARACTERS

OF

COURT OF LEWIS XIV.

TRANSLATED FROM

LES SOUVENIRS

OF

RECOLLECTIONS OF

MADAME DE MONTAIGNE

BY MONTAIGNE



THE TRANSLATION OF THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF

MONTAIGNE

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II

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By the Editor, in the Strand

MEMOIRS, ANECDOTES,

AND

CHARACTERS, &c.

THE Dauphin once launched out into the world, did not confine himself to the society at the princess of Conti's, he amused himself with his wife's maids of honour also, and soon manifested a particular attachment to Mademoiselle de Rambures. But the king, warned by his own experience, and willing to prevent the debauchery which might probably obtain in that quarter,

VOL. II.

A

from

from this ill-example of the prince, resolved to get her immediately married, out of the way.

Upon an hint of his design, several persons offered themselves to her, whom she refused. Monsieur de Polignac was the only husband that she thought would suffer her still to remain mistress of her own actions; but he happened to be the only person, likewise, that the king had any objections to, on account of the Countess de Polignac his mother, who had busied herself too much in the cabals of the countess de Soissons, and who was at that time in exile.

The refusal of the king did not discourage Mademoiselle de Rambures ;
she

she told him plainly, that she knew what she liked herself, better than his majesty, and that in short she would have no other husband but Monsieur de Polignac. The king being picqued at her obstinacy, replied, *That she should be at liberty to marry whom she pleased, but that if Monsieur de Polignac was her choice she must immediately retire from court.* She married him, notwithstanding, and resided in Paris. I leave the world to judge whether Monsieur de Polignac has justified the opinion she had conceived of him, or no.

I may here take the opportunity of describing the princess de Conti, who was as handsome as Madame de Fontanges; as agreeable as her mother, with the height almost, and princely air of her father, and in whose presence

the most beautiful and accomplished persons might have passed unnoticed.

It is not surprizing then, that the fame of her beauty should have reached even to the ears of the great Mogul, to whom her portrait was actually carried. However, some part of the brilliancy of her beauty happened to be obscured by the small-pox, which she took at Fontainbleau, about the age of eighteen. Her husband caught the disorder from her and died of it after he had been pronounced out of danger, and that he thought himself so well, that he expired laughing with his wife and friends*.

* He did die of the small-pox, but not taken from her, nor till some time after, as may be seen by the subsequent part. The old lady forgets her *recollections* sometimes.

It

It must be confessed that the gallantries of the princess de Conti had been carried to an excess, that her understanding was but middling, and that the caprices of her temper weighed considerably against the merits which she really possessed. She was a good friend, generous, and had rendered a great number of kind offices to persons she happened to have been attached to — while many of those she had served, thought themselves sufficiently dispensed with from all obligations of gratitude, on account of that ungracious disposition of humour which tempted them to think they had already paid the purchase. [As if another's vice could justify our own want of virtue!] we must except from this number the princesses of Lorraine, Mesdemoiselles de Lillebonne, and de Commercy; as I have

had a particular opportunity of observing the fidelity of their attachments and the constancy of their acknowledgments toward her. [Compare these with the former !]

I cannot pretend to say how far the temper of the princess de Conti contributed to destroy the conquests of her beauty, or by what fatality it should happen that she was known to have as few faithful lovers as grateful friends ; but it is certain that she possessed not the faculty of preserving their constancy ; and what happened between her and Mademoiselle Chouin, was a circumstance as humiliating, as singular.

Mademoiselle Chouin had been her waiting-maid, was remarkably homely,

a fort of ante-chamber wit, and had a lively manner of relating whatever she happened either to have seen or heard. By such gossipings she won the affections, and gained the confidence of her mistress. However, this same homely peasant contrived to rival the handsomest princess in the world, in the heart of Monsieur de Clermont-chat, then an officer in the guards.

Their scheme, indeed, was to bring the princess by degrees to consent to their marriage, and to obtain through her interest with the dauphin, the favours of the court, which the circumstances of their fortunes stood much in need of.

The imprudence of a courier, during a campaign, disconcerted their

projects, and discovered to the princess de Conti, in the most mortifying manner, that she was but made the dupe of her lover and her friend.

The courier of the duke of Luxembourg delivered all his letters, both public and private to Monsieur de Barbezieux, who promised to have them severally conveyed as directed, but he carried the whole packet directly to the king. [And they say, what I can never be brought to believe, that reasons of state justify the breach of private honour.]

One may judge of the effect that this discovery must have produced, and the resentment of the princess de Conti. Mademoiselle Chouin was dismissed ;
Monsieur

Monfieur de Clermont banifhed, and deprived of his commiffion.

We fhall pick up Mademoifelle Chouin again, in fome other part of my recital, and fee her perform a better, and a greater part, than ſhe ſeems to have acted here*.

The princefs de Conti ſet the example to the other natural daughters of the king, to marry the princes of the blood. Madame de Montespan (perſuaded that the marriage of Madame de la Valiere's daughter would be the precedent, and firſt ſtep, toward the advancement of her own children) did every thing in her power to forward her preferment. The great Condé, alſo, on

* She does, indeed, pick her up again, but I hardly think that what ſhe ſays of her hereafter answers the hint here given.

his part, that gallant hero, regarded this alliance as a considerable advantage to his house; and thought, by this means, to efface the unfavourable impressions which some late proceedings of his had raised in the king's mind, against him.

The prince de Conti, his ^{nephew,} ~~brother~~ still more attached to the court, neglected nothing to testify his joy, and shewed upon this occasion, as indeed in every instance of his life, the solicitude and meanness of an adventurer who had his fortune to make.

I dare affirm, both from what I have seen, and been sufficiently informed of, that Lewis himself would never have thought of exalting his illegitimate
mates

mates to such a stile of grandeur, if it had not been for the earnestness that these two princes of Condé had testified to be connected with him by a tie of this sort.

The two princes of Conti had been brought up with the dauphin, and under the inspection of a mother of most exemplary virtue. They had both of them good natural understandings, and had been well instructed. But the king's son in law, *on the left*, disgusted every one that knew him, by an attempt, in all his actions, of appearing in a light superior to his real merits.

His brother, with as much sense and knowledge as any man could possess, never affected the least display of his talents,

talents, communicating no more of them than might be just necessary to set him on a level with those he conversed with; simple and natural; profound and solid; a trifier even, when it was his humour to be so, he rendered himself agreeable to all sorts of people; but unhappily so profligate in his manners, that he obtained, at length, the character of Cæsar, in the most scandalous part of it*.

The prince of Conti, by way of acting the careless husband, and to shew that he was not subject to the foible of jealousy, collected about his wife all the gay and handsome young men he could pick up; which conduct, as one may well imagine, furnished sufficient handle for certain anecdotes, which,

* *Omnium fæminarum maritus, et omnium virorum uxor,*
SALLUST, or TACITUS.

however, I shall not repeat, but as occasion may chance to introduce any of them, or that I may find it necessary, in order to clear up some other particulars, which I may have yet to relate.

I am now to mention the death of the queen, Maria Theresa of Austria. She died unexpectedly, of a disorder that was made very slight of, at first; but an ill-timed bleeding returned the humour of a small boil back again into her blood, and destroyed her.

She happened to die at a time when the soberer years, and the piety of the king, had begun to render her happy. His attentions were now become marked towards her, which she had been,
for

for many years, a stranger to, before. He visited her more frequently, and endeavoured to entertain and amuse her.

And as she imputed this happy revolution to the influence of Madame de Maintenon, she conceived the greatest fondness for her imaginable, and rendered her every mark of distinction in her power. Nay, I remember that she even carried her affection toward her so far, that she used to bestow the honour of her caresses, even on me, whenever I had that of being in her company, merely on account of my being so near a relation of hers. [There is something peculiarly tender, in this passage, and I feel myself affected, while I recite it.]

But

But this poor good princess had contracted such an awe of the king, which, joined to her own natural timidity, prevented her from being able to speak before him, even among other company; and much more to expose herself to a tête à tête conversation with him. [How many ways men have to be tyrants!] +

I heard Madame de Maintenon tell once that the king having sent for the queen, one day, she found herself so uneasy at the thoughts of appearing before him alone, that she insisted on her going along with her; but she went no farther than the door, and was obliged to take the liberty of pushing her in; at which time she perceived her majesty in so universal an agitation, through her whole frame, that her very hands trembled with apprehension.

This

This was an effect of the lively passion that she had ever borne for her husband, and which his amours had rendered so long a misfortune to her. Besides her confessor too happened to have neither sense or knowledge of the world, but was a mere praying bigot, totally ignorant of the proper devoirs of the different states in life *.

I frame my opinion of this matter, from a letter of Madame de Maintenon to the Abbé Gobelin, where she says, “ I am delighted that the world commends the present conduct of his majesty. If the queen had such a director as you, there is nothing to be

* Madame de Caylus had certainly some meaning in this passage; but I think she has kept her mind to herself.

“ wished

“ wished for that might not have been
 “ expected from the present re-union
 “ of the royal family. But we have
 “ had all the trouble imaginable to
 “ prevail on him to suffer her appear-
 “ ance at the *media-noche* *, lately; for
 “ he conducts her by certain puritanical
 “ rules, which, in my opinion, fitter
 “ become a Carmelite sister, than a
 “ queen.”

In fine, whether through the fault of
 her confessor, her own natural shyness, or
 the strength of a passion so long ren-
 dered unhappy, it must be candidly ac-
 knowledged that she had retained no-
 thing in her manners which could have

* The flesh meat suppers that Roman catholicks
 indulge in, after twelve o'clock at night, on Easter
 eve, are stiled so.

made her agreeable; while the king, on the contrary, was master of every amiable quality that could render a man beloved, without being capable of loving much himself.

Almost every woman pleased him, by turns, except his wife, whose patience and virtue he had sufficiently exercised by his galantries; but in every thing else he never betrayed the least want of consideration that was due to her, and had ever shewn such a regard and respect toward her as might have rendered her happy, if any thing could have made her amends for the loss of a heart that she thought she had an exclusive right to.

Of all the king's mistresses Madame de Montespan was the one that gave
her

her the greatest uneasiness; as well on account of the length of his attachment to her, and the little respect or decency she preserved towards her mistress, as of the former friendship she had herself conceived for her. Madame de Montespan had been appointed lady of the bedchamber, at the recommendation of Monsieur, as I think I related before, and she had been some time at court before the king took any particular notice, either of her beauty, or the lively turns of her conversation; and her sole attention was directed to the queen, whom she used to entertain always, at her couchée, while she waited for the king; for it was remarkable that notwithstanding all his amours, he had never absented himself one night from her bed.

She loved Madame de Montespan, at that time, because she thought her a modest woman, attached to her husband, and faithful in her duty; so that her surprize was equal to her concern, when she discovered her afterwards to become a person so different from her former idea of her.

The uneasiness of the queen was not much mitigated by the manners of Madame de Montespan, and much less so as the bustle that Monsieur de Montespan had begun to make about this affair, obliged the king, in order to retain his mistress at court, and to render her independent of her husband, to nominate her superintendante of the queen's household.

I know

I know little of the particulars of what passed upon this subject, at that time, so that all I can say of the matter, is, that Monsieur de Montespan was looked upon as a person of a bad character, and a fool. He might have carried home his wife, on the first alarm, had he pleased; for the king, though ever so much in love with her, would hardly have ventured to have opposed his authority, against that of an husband. But Monsieur de Montespan had conceived other views to himself, and meant at first to have profited of the occasion toward the advancement of his fortune and interest. And his behaviour since, was owing intirely to a pique and resentment, upon his disappointments.

I find, among the letters of Madame de Maintenon to the Abbé Gobelin, that there had been a formal separation made between them, at the châtelet of Paris. She mentions it in relation to the security of an endowment that Madame de Montespan had a mind to bestow on the hospitallers. One may see, by this, that she was ever officious in good works.

The queen's death presented the court with a moving spectacle. The king was more softened than afflicted; but as these affections have both the same visible effects, and that every thing relative to him appeared to be of consequence, the whole court took part in his concern. The grief of Madame de Maintenon, which fell more immediately under my notice and observation, seemed

seemed to be truly sincere, and founded on esteem and gratitude. I cannot pretend to say the same of the tears that Madame de Montespan shed, upon that occasion; all I know is, that she really did weep extremely, and that there appeared vast uneasiness in her at the time, founded, I believe, on the apprehensions of her being suffered to fall into the hands of her husband, again.

Upon the queen's death Madame de Maintenon would have retired from court; but Monsieur de la Rochefoucault took her by the arm one day, and forced her toward the king, saying, *This is no time to quit his majesty; he has occasion for you.*

This motion in Monsieur de la Rochefoucault, could proceed from no

other sentiment but his zeal and attachment to his prince ; in which the interest of Madame de Maintenon could have no part.

She staid hardly a minute with the king, and returned to her own apartment, escorted by Monsieur de Louvois ; who intreated her to go to the dauphiness and prevent her following the king to St. Cloud, and persuade her to keep her bed, as she was with child, and had been just let blood: *The king, said he, has no occasion for such demonstrations of affection, and the kingdom wants an heir.*

The king went to St. Cloud, where he remained, from the Friday that the queen died, till the Monday following, when

when he set out for Fontainbleau; and the dauphiness being thought by that time able to travel, joined him, and went the journey along with him.

Madame de Maintenon followed her; and appeared before the king in such deep mourning and with so afflicted an air, that he, whose grief was quite over before then, could not avoid rallying her upon it; on which occasion I would not take my oath but she might have said to herself what the Marshal de Grammont did to Madame Herault.

She had lost her husband; and the Mareschal de Grammont (in compliment to her supposed grief) was lamenting the death *of his friend*. He is better where he is, she replied—Then
my

my concern for him is at an end, said he.

During the journey to Fountainbleau which I now speak of, the influence of Madame de Maintenon rose to its highest pitch. She intirely altered the whole plan of her life, and I believe that one principal measure of it was to act the very reverse of what she had observed in Madame de Montespan.

Mefdames de Chevreuse, and de Beauvilliers, with whom she had united herself in the strictest bonds of amity, had the merit with her of having never paid their court to Madame de Montespan, notwithstanding the alliance that Monsieur Colbert (their father) had
made

made between his third daughter and the duke de Mortemar, her nephew.

This marriage cost the king fourteen hundred thousand francs; eight hundred thousand of them to clear the incumbrances on the estates of the Mortemar family; and six hundred thousand for the portion of Mademoiselle de Colbert.

However, neither this alliance, nor the high relish that women have naturally for a court, could ever induce either of them to pay theirs to Madame de Montespan. But they thought now that Madame de Maintenon had opened them an honourable door into *the circle*, and they entered it with the greater joy, as they found themselves just at that time set even at a greater distance from it,

it, than before, by the death of the queen, to whom they had been both ladies of the bedchamber.

This connexion became intimate, in a short time, and subsisted till the disgrace of the bishop of Cambray. But I shall reserve to some other place an account both of the favour and its reverse, which befel this good prelate, to whom these ladies had always been remarkably attached.

If Mesdames de Chevreuse and de Beauvilliers courted the matronage of Madame de Maintenon, she was not less pleased, on her part, to have the king take notice, from their solicitude, the difference that persons of character and merit had so strongly marked between Madame de Montespan and her.

To

To these ladies were joined Madame de Montchevreuil, the princess of Harcourt, and the Countess of Grammont. Monsieur de Brancas, who had been gentleman usher to the queen, famous for his great absences of thought, and an intimate friend of Madame de Maintenon's, was father to the princess of Harcourt, whom Madame de Maintenon had got preferred in marriage, and with whom she had ever preserved a friendly intercourse, on account of the regard and esteem she had always professed for her father; which is a point that I think necessary to clear up, in this place, in order to justify her upon a connexion which has been sometimes objected to her; to which may be added, that Madame de Maintenon was a perfect stranger to all the scandal that
has

has been whispered about her; and never was acquainted with any thing in the Princess of Harcourt, except her domestic misfortunes, and apparent piety.

The Countess of Grammont owed good part of her reception with Madame de Maintenon, to her being a sort of favourite with the king; for otherwise she thought her rather agreeable than estimable. She had more of the English, than the French woman, about her. Her character was made up of contradictions. She was flattering and censorious, insolent and fawning; in fine, she had nothing fixed about her, except a certain haughtiness of mien which she never abated of, though she used to boast of an invariableness in senti-

sentiment, and a constancy in friendship. However it must be confessed, that in all her humours and pretences there was something in her conversation and manner that was extremely lively and engaging.

Madame de Maintenon, besides her attention to the king's tastes and relishes, had a still farther motive for her favourable reception of the Countess of Grammont; which was to assist her new devotion, and confirm as much as possible a conversion, founded upon that of Monsieur Ducharmel.

This was a gentleman of Lorrain, who had been remarked at court for deep play. He had originally a good fortune, and was successful in the chances,

chances, which enabled him to distinguish himself by his expences, and become the *bon ton* of high life, for a considerable time.

+ [It were much to be wished that the destructive custom of play was restrained, at least, though better abolished, in all nations : a practice so injurious both to policy and morals, ought surely to call upon the notice of a legislature. Gaming, like the grave, levels all distinction; puts the peasant and the prince on an equal footing; and associates the countess with the courtesan. An edict against play would be a much more desirable law, than the one against duelling; for more mischief infinitely is suffered by the *die*, than from single rapier.]

Monfieur

Monfieur Ducharmel retired unexpectedly at once, and betook himfelf, on the fudden, to a monaftic life, upon fome vifion or other, that he had taken it into his head had appeared to him ; and the fame ray of grace, by an happy reflection, happened to glance on the countefs of Grammont alfo, at the fame time.

Perhaps that inequality which ſhe manifested in her conduct, and which I have been frequently a witnefs of, might have arifen from the ſtruggle which paſſed conſtantly within her breaſt, between her reaſon and her paſſions ; for I believe ſhe was never thought to be a natural devotée, however, ſhe came to be frightened into the character.

I imagine that this is as good a place as any to speak of Madame d'Heudicourt, though she had not yet returned to court at this time; but she appeared there soon after, and as she is one of the most singular persons that I was ever acquainted with, and that a number of circumstances are continually recalling her to my recollection, I shall deliver her character and history more fully than I was at leisure to do on my first mention of her * :

Madame d'Heudicourt, formerly Mademoiselle de Pons, was nearly related to the Marechal d'Albret, whom the scandalous chronicle has recorded as a lover of hers, and lived always with Madame de Maintenon and Madame de

* Page 150, vol. I.

Montespan on the most friendly terms imaginable, till the accident of her disgrace.

It is certain that her fortune was by no means equal to her birth, and that she was not in a condition of life to enable her to make her appearance at court, without the assistance of the Mareschal d'Albret; nor on any terms with propriety, except under the matronage of Madame d'Albret; which was not an honour very difficult to obtain; according to the character already given of that lady, somewhere here before*.

She appeared then first at court in her train, where her attractions both of person and conversation very soon dis-

* Page 16, vol. I.

tinguished her. The king could not observe her with indifference, and hesitated some time, in his choice, between her and Madame de la Valiere; but the friends of Madame d'Albret, set on, perhaps, by the Mareschal, represented to her that she could not suffer this young beauty to remain longer under the king's eye without seeing her ruined before her own, and partaking of the scandal herself, by continuing her in the danger—upon these remonstrances, Madame d'Albret carried her off, suddenly, to Paris, on the pretence of a supposed illness of the Mareschal.

Madame d'Heudicourt used to speak very freely on this circumstance of her life, particularly when she mentioned it to the king; which was a scene I have
some-

sometimes been a witness of. She made no secret of the mortifications she was sensible of when she found the Mareschal in *perfect* health, and that she had discovered the finesse they had made use of upon that occasion. It was in vain that she returned to court soon after. The post[*of dishonour*] had before been taken possession of by la Valiere. †

Mademoiselle de Pons, then, the bloom of youth being now over, with birth indeed, but without fortune, was glad at last to accept the hand of the old Marquis d'Heudicourt; to bring about which match, her friend, Madame de Maintenon exerted every art and address she was mistress of; and Madame de Montespan also concurred

in the same scheme for her establishment in life.

I am not able to recount the circumstances of her disgrace at court, as I have heard them but in a confused manner, and only know of this one particular, that it arose from some love letters she happened to write to Monsieur de Bethune, ambassador in Poland, an agreeable man, and a good companion. For though I was never in his company, I knew him sufficiently from the character I have often heard drawn of him by his friends, who happened also to be some of mine too.

If there had been nothing more than mere subjects of galantry, treated of in this correspondence, it is not probable
that

that either the king or Madame de Montespan were at that æra such prudes as to have been scandalized at the discovery of an intercourse of that kind ; it was therefore generally supposed that Madame d'Heudicourt had given offence by making somewhat too free with other particulars, which had passed about that time, at court, and were matters quite foreign to her own amour.

I know for a certainty that Madame de Maintenon told the king, that in order to justify herself on relinquishing her friend, it was necessary to produce some more certain evidence of her unworthiness, than her own sentiment ; upon which those letters, which I forget by what means they happened to get possession of, were produced ; and Ma-

dame d'Heudicourt was immediately given up, on all sides.

She then retired to Heudicourt, where she remained for several years ; and where the mortification she sustained on account of this unlucky event, brought on disorders that were several times near putting an end to her life. And one particular that attended her maladies was the putting her leg out of joint, in a convulsion fit, while she happened to be confined to her bed, and which not being properly attended to at the time, left a confirmed lameness on her for the remainder of her life ; so that this woman who was naturally well made, and of a graceful movement, was rendered not able to walk a step, on her return to court.

I had

I had never seen her till that æra of her life, and she was then so much impaired in her charms, that I could hardly persuade myself she had ever been handsome. She was for some time at Versailles, without having any interview with Madame de Maintenon, who, however, used frequently to send me to visit her, and she always received me with great professions of affection, on account of my being so nearly related to her old friend.

But by degrees all disgusts and resentments subsided, the king released Madame de Maintenon from her promise never to see Madame d'Heudicourt again, and they became at last as perfectly reconciled to each other, as if there had never happened the least interruption in their connexion.

In

In truth I thought Madame de Maintenon extremely happy in having such a companion restored again to her society, whose conversation was so natural and easy, and whose imagination was endowed with so lively a peculiarity, as never failed to entertain and engage.

However, though she used frequently to amuse and divert Madame de Maintenon, by her sallies of thought and turns of expression, her style of conversation was never much esteemed by her, as may be judged by her character of it, which I have given you here before *.

I have nothing to add to what I have already said about Madame de Mont-

* Page 151, vol. I.

chevreuil, except that she was the principal person confided in by Madame de Maintenon, with regard to the secret of some particulars that passed at court, after the death of the queen.

During the secession at Fontainebleau, immediately upon that event, I took notice of so remarkable an agitation in the looks and manners of Madame de Maintenon, that I was afterwards convinced, on recalling it to my mind, that this emotion must have been occasioned by the great uncertainty of her situation, and of the struggle in her resolves, between her fears and hopes. In fine, her heart was affected, and her mind disturbed:

In order to conceal the true source of all these several solitudes, and to
account

account for the tears which her attendants and I have observed her to shed, upon that occasion, she pretended to be subject to hysterics, and used always to take the air with Madame de Montchevreuil alone, in the forest of Fontainebleau; and would sometimes stay abroad till unseasonable hours, to prevent as much as possible her emotions from being remarked upon, by any body else. But her vapours were soon exhaled, and the storm in her mind succeeded by a perfect calm, before we quitted Fontainebleau.

I shall not presume to penetrate into a mystery which I ought to respect, on account of so many reasons, but I shall only name those who were certainly in the secret of that affair. These were,
 Monsieur

Monfieur Harley, then archbifhop of Paris, Monfieur and Madame de Montchevreüil, Monfieur Bontems, firft valet de chambre to the king, and a waiting maid of Madame de Maintenon, a perfon as capable as any of the cabinet, to guard a fecret, and whole principles and fentiments rofe infinitely above her fituation in life.

I have feen, fince the death of my dear aunt, fome of her letters that are preferved at St. Cyr, written to her confeffor, the Abbé Gobelin, whom I have mentioned before. In the firft parcel of them one may fee a woman much difgusted with the court, and who feems to defire nothing more than fome fair pretence or other to quit it, for ever; in
the

the latter ones, *written since the death of the queen*, this same Recluse, *that would be*, no longer laments her situation, resigns her conflicts, and confesses *an indispensable duty* to continue still at Versailles.

And what I would have particularly remarked here, is, that though her sentiments about her situation were very different, at these several æras, yet her principles, her notions of religion, her piety, and virtue, were however strictly the same, at both times.

It was then that Madame de Maintenon undertook to found by degrees the royal institution of St. Lewis. But it may not be amiss to recount the history of this matter in a fuller and more particular manner.

Madame

Madame de Maintenon had a singular passion, as well as a remarkable talent for the education of youth: the elevation of her sentiments, and the indigence she had formerly sustained herself, had inspired her with so active a compassion for the poor noblesse, that in every instance of her power, influence, or liberality, she always preferred persons of birth, to others; and I have often heard her express herself warmly against the little distinction that used to be preserved at court, except with regard to a few great families, between commoners and nobles.

[I am tempted to say something here, upon this subject—and yet I cannot venture to give my own opinion about it, any other way than by asking the sentiments

+

+
 timents of others, with regard to this point or punctilio :—Is there, or is there not any merit in *family*, independent of the worth of individuals ? The christian states of Europe, indeed, pay a respect to pedigree : but may not this have arisen originally from the Jews, who were the first people on record that ever attended to it ? they had a two-fold reason for it, both in their law and their gospel : and may not the superstition of it, as it is natural to do, have descended to the nations derived from them, notwithstanding the reason of it has so long ceased ? for to pass by the impertinence of the emperor of *Siam*, who confers titles of honour upon his elephants, do either the Turks, or any of the other Asiatic states pay any manner of regard to genealogy ; except
 in

In the lines of their kings, which is but
merely a policy of succession?

Persons self-enobled by their own
virtue naturally inspire us with an
esteem and awe for their characters ;
but shall we suffer this *duty* to become
a *debt*, by admitting a right in their
heirs to exact a tribute which their me-
rits have not earned?]

Madame de Maintenon happened
to become acquainted, when she was
at Montchevreuil, with an Ursuline
sister, whose convent had gone to de-
cay—to her no great mortification—for
I do not believe that this same recluse
had ever much call to a nunnery pro-
fession. However that might have been,
Madame de Maintenon, from the over-

D

flowing

flowing of her own zeal, took compassion on her, and as soon as the circumstances of her fortune could permit it, hired a house, which she consecrated to devotion, and nominated this Ursuline as prioress on the foundation.

She then endowed it with a number of pensioners, which she augmented in proportion to her capacity of maintaining them; and three other female devotees joined themselves as coadjutors to Madame de Brinon, which was the name of our abbess.

This community was first established at *Montmorency*, and afterwards transferred to *Ruël*; but the king having quitted *St. Germain's* for *Versailles*, and enlarged his park there, several houses
hap-

happened to be comprehended within the walls, among which was *Noisy-le-sec*, which Madame de Maintenon obtained a grant of, and transplanted Madame de Brinon with her disciples thither.

It was there that she formed the design of founding the society of St. Cyr. She communicated her purpose to the king, who, far from opposing so noble and generous a scheme, most readily concurred in it, with all that princely liberality of soul which was natural to him. And this magnificent and extensive building was carried on with such expedition and spirit, that it was completed in less than a year, and rendered capable of receiving two hundred and fifty pensioners, and thirty-six

matrons, with all the inferior attendants necessary to officiate in so large a community.

If I stile them *Matrons*, instead of *Abbeses*, who were to preside over this convent, it is because the first scheme of the foundation was to establish them as a society of *Chanoinesses*, only, exempt from taking the vow; but as this was thought to be attended with some inconveniences, it was determined, some time after the translation from *Noisy* to *St. Cyr*, to impose the veil on the superiors, leaving only the pupils free. Constitutions were accordingly instituted, and an order was formed, composed out of the rules of the *Ursulins*, and the sisterhood of *St. Mary*.

The

The condition which intituled a person to be received at St. Cyr, was an equal proof both of their nobility and poverty; and if any fraud has ever obtained in either of these articles, as has sometimes been suspected, neither the founders, nor the superiors of the convent are answerable for it. The herald at arms certifies the first requisite, and the bishop of the diocese, jointly with the governor of the province, vouch the latter. If these commissioners, who may not improperly be deemed guardians, or trustees for the foundation, shall suffer themselves to be imposed upon, or knowingly concur in the deceit themselves, it must be because corruption reigns too universally throughout; and that no prevention of human foresight is able to hinder abuses from sliding into the best contrived, or most perfect establishments of polity.

All manner of panegyric bestowed upon such an ordinance as this, would be equally insufficient, as superfluous. It will speak for itself during the intire date of its subsistence, infinitely better to the honour of its founders, than the highest elogy that is in the power of words to frame; and it is most devoutly to be wished, that the successors of Lewis the Fourteenth may not only protect this establishment, so necessary to the noblesse, but enlarge its foundation as much as possible, whenever a lasting and advantageous peace may afford them means and leisure, for so princely an attention *.

* The present king of France has since established a noble provision for the maintenance and education of five hundred young men of family without fortune, the particulars of which I have not been informed of; but the general idea of it alone is sufficient to do him honour.

What

What an happy circumstance must it be for a family as poor, as noble, or for many an old officer perhaps, broken by campaigns, and rendered unfit for service, to receive a loved child home again to his arms, after having been carefully and completely maintained and educated, during the space of thirteen years (which is the term of their residence at St. Cyr) and all at free costs, besides the endowment of a thousand crowns, either to prefer her in marriage, or enable her to maintain herself in the provinces?

But these were the least objects of this noble foundation; for the education and principles which the pupils receive, in that seminary, and which they are qualified to communicate to their

relations, friends, and neighbours, upon their returning into the world again, were articles truly worthy of the views, the sentiments, and the soul of Madame de Maintenon, and Lewis the Fourteenth.

+ [—*A king, indeed ! I had almost said, jure divino ; for it is character, not a crown—it is sentiment, and not succession, that form a sovereign.*]

Madame de Brinon presided, on the first institution of this establishment, over all the rules and orders of the convent, and was designed to have been continued the mother abbess, for life. But as she trusted too much to this intention herself, she ventured to give such a loose to a temper naturally insolent and imperious, that Madame de Maintenon soon found reason to repent her

her having placed so haughty a superior over her society.

However, she soon redressed this evil, by dismissing the governante, and that at a time when she was looked upon by the world as one of the principal leaders at court; so that those who sought preferment there (considering her as the second favourite) used to solicit, memorial, and levée her, for some time before, which disgusted Madame de Maintenon extremely, [and might possibly have hastened her dismissal.] †

In fine, during one of the recesses at Fontainbleau, Madame de Brinon received an order to quit St. Cyr, before the return of the court to Versailles, but was left at liberty to choose her own retreat ;

retreat; and had a stipend appointed for her sufficient to support her with comfort and decency, during the remainder of her life.

Among all the number of her clients who had paid their court to her before, and even of those whom she had been actually serviceable to, the Duchess of Brunswick was the only person who continued her affection and respect towards her, after her disgrace. She took her home to her own house, till she wrote to her aunt, the princess Palatine, then abbess of the convent of Montbuisson, and prevailed on her to receive her into that society. She then did herself the honour of conducting her thither in person, where she was not only well accepted of, on her first introduction,

duction, but cherished and treated with friendship and respect, to the last moment of her life. [She did honour to the Brunswic line.] +

[Such stories are pleasant to relate—I wish I could compose a volume of them. I should hope, for the sake of human nature, that there have been instances sufficient to frame a folio of this kind. But then again, how mortifying must the reflection be, that ingratitude may have prevented the publication of them.] Madame de Maintenon, to do her justice, who had always an esteem for the Duchefs of Brunswic, on account of her general character, attached herself more strongly to her, ever after her behaviour on this occasion. +

Madame

Madame de Brinon was fond of poetry and dramatic representations; but instead of the plays of Corneille and Racine, which she did not think proper to have performed by the pensioners of her society, she wrote some others herself—most miserable compositions, indeed! however, it was owing to her passion for the theatre, that we are indebted for the two fine pieces that Racine has since written for the exhibitions at St. Cyr.

However, though Madame de Brinon failed in her essays of this kind, she had a good deal of wit, and a remarkable faculty in writing and speaking, upon any subject whatsoever. She composed several ingenious sermons; and every Sunday after mass was over,
she

He used to expound the scriptures, with as much orthodoxy as Monsieur le Tourneur, the confessor of St. Cyr, could have done.

But I return to the origin of tragedy, in this convent. Madame de Maintenon went once to attend the representation of a piece of Madame de Brinon's, which she found to be such sad stuff, that she forbade her to exhibit any more of them; but ordered her to select some of the fine pieces of Corneille or Racine; choosing those chiefly which had the least portion of love matters in them.

The young pensioners then got up the tragedy of *Cinna* among them, and performed it surprizingly well, for girls who had been trained to the stage
by

by an old mother abbess only. They afterwards exhibited *Andromaché*, and whether the parts had been better cast, or that these buskined virgins had begun to catch the air of the court, the politest part of which they had frequent opportunities of mixing with, this piece happened to be so gracefully performed, that Madame de Maintenon in applauding it began to be alarmed, lest occupations of this ensnaring kind might insinuate sentiments and sensations in their minds different from those she could wish to have them inspired with.

However, as she had permitted them, at first, from an opinion that these sort of amusements might be an advantage to the young women, in improving their mien, correcting their pronunciation,

and assisting their memory (for she neglected not the minutest article that might contribute towards the education of persons whom she looked upon so justly to be her own peculiar charge) she wrote a letter to Monsieur Racine, just after this latter representation, beginning with these words: "Our little girls have just exhibited your *Andromacké*, and have performed it so well, that they shall never play it again, nor any other of your pieces."

But in the same letter, she requests him in the moments of his leisure to compose some sort of moral, or historical dramatic poem, for the purpose, quite devoid of the least passion of love, and in which he was not to consider his reputation as a writer, to be in any sort

con-

concerned, as it should ever remain buried at St. Cyr, adding that it was of no sort of consequence whether the rules of the *drama* were preserved in it or no, provided that it reached the *utile dulci*, by contributing toward the sole design she had in view, of conveying instruction to the minds of her fair pupils, through the vehicle of amusement.

This requisition threw poor Racine into the utmost agitation of mind. He would be glad to oblige Madame de Maintenon, the refusal was impossible to a courtier, but the compliance hazardous for one who had so great a reputation to sustain, and who, though he had at that time left off writing for the stage, would, however, have been extremely morti-

mortified at suffering the character (which his former compositions had so highly established) to sink in the opinion of the public, by such an imperfect essay as was then exacted from him.

Monsieur Boileau (whom he went to consult about this matter) declared at once for the negative ; but Racine had not strength of mind enough to follow his advice, which the world has had good reason to be pleased at, since ; for after some reflection upon the matter, he found, in the subject of *Esther*, every thing he could wish for, to enable him to comply with Madame de Maintenon's commands.—Boileau himself was so struck with the idea, that he spirited him up to the execution of it, with as much earnestness as he had before expressed to prevent his undertaking it.

Racine was not long before he carried to Madame de Maintenon, not only the sketch, stiled the *Skeleton* of his piece, (for he used always to write them scene by scene in prose, before he turned them into verse) but he brought her also the first act compleated. She was extremely charmed with the whole of the design, nor did her modesty prevent her from finding, in the character of his heroine, and in other circumstances of the subject, some things which complimented her extremely. The character of *Vashti* had its applications; and *Haman* its lines of resemblance; but independent of these particulars, the story of Esther alone, afforded an artful hint enough, for a representation at St. Cyr.

The choruses, that Racine, in imitation of the Grecian stage, had always a
view

view of restoring to the theatre, appeared to fall naturally enough into this species of writing, [which consisted not only of *action*, but *didaction* ;] and he felt himself happy in this opportunity of introducing, and giving the public a taste for, them. +

[The personage of *Vashti* was said to have alluded to Madame de Montepan ; but I cannot see any resemblance between them, except in her being supplanted by Madame de Maintenon. + The late queen appears a fitter parallel, as they were both forsaken consorts, and equally shy of appearing before their husbands *. Monsieur de Louvois' persecution of the Huguenots, was said to have been glanced at, under the character of *Haman*.]

* See page 15 of this vol.

In fine, I think that if one was to consider the place, the time, and the circumstances of this representation, they must agree with me that Monsieur Racine did not shew less ingenuity, upon this occasion, than in any of his other works, however excellent in themselves.

Esther was exhibited about a year after Madame de Maintenon had interdicted the performance of any prophane piece at St. Cyr, and it received such vast applause, that the memory of it remains still fresh in our minds, to this instant.

I was then very young, and not thought capable of representing any part in this performance; but happening to have been present at the recitals that

Monsieur

Monsieur Racine used to make of every scene as he finished them, I had got most of the lines by heart, and repeating them one day before him, he was so pleased with my rehearsing, that he requested Madame de Maintenon to suffer me to exhibit myself, in some part of the drama.

This she consented to; but I declined the taking any of the parts from those who had been appointed to them already, so that in compliment to my scruple he contrived to accommodate me by giving me a prologue to speak on the occasion, which he wrote specially for this purpose.

However, by being constantly present at the performance, I had got the

whole piece so perfectly by heart, that I played many of the parts successively, afterwards, occasionally, as any of the girls happened to be indisposed, during the winter, throughout the whole of which it was exhibited ; and this piece which was designed to have been confined within the walls of St. Cyr, at length broke loose from the cloister, and was several times represented before the king and the whole court, and ever with the same applause.

+ The great success of this [*modern*
antient] manner of composition, inspired the author with such a taste for it, that he immediately after undertook another work of the same kind, and fixed on the story of Athaliah ; that is, the death of that queen, and the restoration

ration of Joas, as the fittest subject for his purpose, of any in Holy Writ. He lost no time in this business, and laboured at it so assiduously, that the winter following the piece was made ready for representation.

But Madame de Maintenon received on all sides so many hints of disapprobation, such remonstrances from devotees, and such opposition from the poets jealous of Racine's fame, who not only procured their friends to speak to her on this subject, but wrote several anonymous strictures against the exhibition, also, themselves, that it finally put a stop to the performance of *Athalie*, at St. Cyr.

They represented to Madame de Maintenon that it was extremely inde-

cent to expose on a theatre so many young ladies of family, collected from all parts of the kingdom, on the pretence of giving them a true Catholic education; and that this was a measure quite inconsistent with the notion which had been at first conceived of the foundation of St. Cyr. They spoke more particularly with regard to me too, as being her near relation, and placed more immediately under her guardianship and matronage.

The place, the subjects of the pieces, and the manner in which the spectators were introduced at St. Cyr, might have sufficiently justified Madame de Maintenon in the continuing these representations; nor need she have been in the least embarrassed at an opposition
which

which was only founded on ignorance, envy, or malice. But she was of a timorous nature, and put an end to these spectacles at St. Cyr, just as Athaliah was ready to have been exhibited.

However, she brought her young actresses, once or twice, privately to Versailles, to perform it before the king, in his own apartment, but dressed in their usual apparel, without any theatrical habits; and indeed the spirit of the piece was sufficient to support it, without the aid of foreign assistance.

I was present at it, and thought it much better performed there, than afterwards at the theatre in Paris, where I believe that Monsieur Racine must have been extremely mortified to have
seen

seen it so misrepresented, as it appeared to me to be, by a painted Jehoshabeath *, a bombastic Athaliah †; and a high priest †, who appeared rather like a demoniac *possessed*, than a prophet *inspired*.

To which we may add, that the leaving out the choruses (as they did in Paris) must have deprived the representation of one of its principal merits; and that the actors, and the audience being intermixed and confounded together (as was then usual on that theatre) must have considerably abated the spirit of the performance. But notwith-

* La Duclos. We may suppose that women wore *their own faces*, in those days, when even a *painted actress* is here made a term of reproach.

‡ La Desmarre.

† Beaubour.

standing

standing these disadvantages, it was admired then, and will ever be so*.

The poets, in rivalry of Monsieur Racine, wrote several pieces for St. Cyr, but they were neither performed there, nor any where else; except one only, named Judith, a dramatic poem, that the Abbé Testu, before-mentioned, set Monsieur Boyer to work upon, and assisted him in the composition of; which was represented at the theatre in Paris, with a success satirically marked by Racine, in an epigram, beginning thus :

Boyer in Judith had a lucky hit;

[For fame oft follows chance as well as wit.] +

[Nothing has ever surprized me so much, as that there should ever happen any enmity or disagreement, between +

* Voltaire abuses it; but so he does Shakespeare.
persons

+ persons of literature, taste, or genius—
 I mean arising from a jealousy of each
 other's talents, merely. They are surely
 more particularly formed for a mutual
 society, than any other denomination of
 people in the world; and seem to bear a
 nearer relation to each other than that
 of man to man, even that of brother
 to brother. They appear to be a pe-
 culiar race, and ought to consider them-
 selves all as of one family, house, or
 lineage. Reason and speech distinguish
 us from the inferior creation; and me-
 thinks that wit and genius elevate the
 select as much above us again.

+ A mutual concord among themselves
 would be a mutual advantage to each.
 They would improve, inspire, and sti-
 mulate each other—emulation surely
 may

may be void of jealousy or envy. But alas! the balance of allotments in life require these dissensions—they are the fines perhaps paid to fools and block-heads, for this very superiority.]

But it is full time now to quit St. Cyr and its theatre, and return again to Madame de Montespan, who remained still at court, for some years longer, a prey to ambition and scruples of conscience, till she reduced the king, at last, to the necessity of sending her a message, by the bishop of Meaux, that it would be much better, both for her and himself, that she should retire.

She resided for some time at Clagny, where I have seen her often with the duchess of Orleans, her daughter; and

as

as she came frequently to see her, at Versailles, during the siege of Mons, where the princesses did not accompany the king, they compared her to one of those disturbed ghosts, who are reported to haunt still about the place of their former abode, till the term of their expiation is passed.

In truth one could never perceive, in so mean a conduct, the least trace of that spirit and greatness of mind, which I have imputed to her, in other places. But both descriptions of her character are equally true. [For though physical nature is ever consistent, human nature is rarely so.]

Nay, during the latter years of her residence at court, she appeared there in

no higher rank or character, than as governess to Mademoiselle de Blois, her own daughter, since duchess of Orleans, as above mentioned. It is true, indeed, that she did endeavour to revenge herself of these mortifications to her pride, as well as she could, by continual satirical strictures, and severe sallies of wit, against persons, circumstances, and times.

I remember to have seen her at Madame de Maintenon's apartments once, at an assembly for the poor, which she had established monthly, where the company used to present their alms; and where Madame de Montespan appeared among the rest.

One of those days, as she passed through the ante-chamber, and observed the

the curate, and *les sœurs-grises*, or fable-sisterhood, with all the apparatus of the order that Madame de Maintenon professed herself of; she said to her, when she came into the assembly room, *Your ante-chamber, Madam, is admirably furnished out, for your funeral oration.*

Madame de Maintenon had a relish for her wit, and at the same time so perfect an indifference to the resentment which piqued Madame de Montespan against her, that she seemed always pleased with her liveliness of thought and expression, and was generally the first to repeat the bon mots she used to throw out, even against herself.

The legitimated children of the king suffered no loss, by the absence of Ma-
7
-dame

dame de Montespan, for I am convinced that Madame de Maintenon attended more to their interests than ever she would have done herself; and in reality I have sometimes thought that she extended her favour toward them, rather too far, in many particulars; though she certainly, latterly, seemed to agree with the rest of the world, that the king, in the decline of his life, was heaping fortune and honours too profusely upon them.

But it was then too late to prevent this excess in him, as age and domestic misfortunes had rendered his mind more feeble, and the Duchess of Maine more enterprizing. But enough here—I shall explain my sentiments on these matters, more at large, when I come to give an account of what passed, during

the latter years of the life of Lewis the fourteenth *.

+ [Here Madame de Caylus repeats the story she had before told us in page 7, 8, &c. of this volume, of the princess of Conti, Monsieur de Clermont-chat, and Mademoiselle Chouin, and then proceeds as follows—that is with regard to facts only ; for as this lady is not an author to be translated by dictionary and grammar merely, the reader I hope will indulge me in taking some liberties with the text, which may be requisite to one or other of two very useful purposes, either to render it intelligible, or entertaining. A *translator* ought to be an *interpreter* of his author—he is obliged to give his *sense* only, but not his *nonsense*, to the reader. This is being, methinks, rather too *faithful* a transcriber. Though in some places it was impossible to be avoided. See page 150, vol. I. par. 1. latter part, and compare it.]

When Mademoiselle Chouin was banished from court, she retired to

* Which promise she has not performed, in this work at least.

Paris,

Paris, where she received particular marks of the Dauphin's friendship and esteem; though upon what merits she happened to be so distinguished, it is hard to say, after my former description of her. Perhaps, from some lover's pique he might have conceived against the princess of Conti, he meant to shew her that the homely Chouin was capable of rivalling her, in an higher instance than that of Clermont-chat—perhaps her picturesque descriptions and lively prate might have entertained him, in the moments of his retired leisure—for I told you before that he could not read †. [Or not to dive, like *Tacitus*, too deeply into the springs and causes of events, might not this extraordinary attachment be referred, at once,

† Page 129, first paragraph, vol. I.

to that great governing principle, into which the many unaccountable actions of mankind can alone be resolved, namely, caprice ?]

However that might have been, it is certain that he used frequently to see her ; first at *Choisy*, a villa of his, and afterwards at *Meudon*. These interviews were kept private, for some time ; but by admitting now one confidant, and then another, the secret became public, in time, though *La Chouin* kept herself quite shut up in her apartment at Meudon, where she latterly resided intirely.

It became at length a matter of great curiosity at court, to be admitted to these *têtes à têtes*. The Duchess of Burgundy, the Dauphin's daughter-in-law, first led the way—she begged and obtained

tained the favour. Afterwards the king himself and Madame de Maintenon were permitted to see her, a little before the dauphin's death. They went to dine at Meudon — Mademoiselle Chouin was not at table; but in the evening they were carried alone, by the princess, into her private apartment.

I remember to have heard it surmised, at that time, that the dauphin had privately married her; but this I believe would have been but a sort of ^{work of} ~~supererogation~~. [She had not the ^{advantage} ~~manage-~~ment of Madame de Maintenon.] The real truth I believe to have been this; that by her influence over him she prevented his entering into the cabals that were then forming in the court, and was therefore favoured, countenanced, and encouraged, by the king, Madame de Maintenon, and the Dukes of Burgundy.

The irregularity of these notes, memorandums, or recollections, leave me at liberty to return back to the Count de Vermandois, son to the king, and Madame de la Valiere; a prince of an agreeable appearance, and promising talents: he died at the army, on his first campaign, of a short fever, as it was then given out; though some anecdotes of that time hint differently, about this matter*. The king bestowed the for-

[* See Voltaire's account of the state prisoner in the steel masque. The Count de Vermandois was supposed to have been the person. He had some warm words with the dauphin, and struck him. This offence is death, by the French laws. But *Lewis* was no *Lucius*†. He could not pass so severe a sentence against his son; and it was said that the count was carried off, by dragoons (and not by a fever, as reported) and secreted for life. He died in 1704.

I have another surmise to offer, with regard to this extraordinary personage, ^{the man in the mask.} if it might not be deemed a sort of French treason. ^

† *Lucius Junius Brutus.*

tune

tune he had endowed him with, to the princess of Conti, his sister, and his post of admiral, to the Count of Toulouse, the youngest of his sons by Madame de Montespan.

Mademoiselle de Nantes, the eldest daughter of Madame de Montespan, by the king, whose character and description I have already given*, was married to the Duke of *Bourbon*, grandson to the famous prince of Condé; but as she was only twelve years old, they were not suffered to live together, till three or four years after. This wedding was celebrated at Versailles, in the great presence chamber of the king, with illuminations, fireworks, and every article of magnificence, that Lewis was distinguished for, upon all public occa-

* Page 70, vol. I.

sions. The great Condé, and his grandson and heir, the bridegroom, neglected nothing to testify their joy, on this event, as they had spared no address in bringing it about.

I have before mentioned the princess of Conti's having had the small-pox, at Fontainbleau, in the height and brilliancy of her beauty. Nothing could surely be more lovely than she appeared, the very evening before that disorder seized her. And even since, none but those who had seen her before, could believe that her charms had suffered the least damage, from her distemper.

However she was in danger of losing something better, though perhaps less dear to her, than beauty, as her life was
for

for a time despaired of. The great Condé, uncle to the prince, alarmed at the report, fled to her from Chantilly, though he was then labouring under a fit of the gout, and rendered her not only the solicitous attentions of a fond parent, but even the servile offices of an affectionate nurse-tender.

The king, likewise, on hearing of her danger, hastened to see her; but the prince of Condé opposed his entrance into her chamber, lest the sight might have too much affected him. Here was a struggle between paternal love and a courtier's zeal, glorious for the object of it; but the father at last prevailed, and threw himself on his knees, by her bedside, in spite of the resistance of the prince.

The

The princess returned again to life, the king to Versailles, but the affectionate Condé remained with his lovely niece, for the rest of his life, which was not long; for the agitation of his spirits, with the watchings and fatigue to a body already old and wasted, put an end to his days, in about a year after this crisis.

Peace being at this time established in France, the princes of Conti desired leave of the king to serve a campaign in Hungary. His majesty was pleased with the spirit of the young men, and readily granted his permission. But their example had such an effect on several of the nobility of the kingdom, that many of them applied for the same licence to follow the camp, till by de-

grees, most of the youth of France, distinguished either by their birth or bravery, would have quitted the kingdom, to serve under a prince who was a natural enemy to these dominions, if Monsieur de Louvois had not foreseen the consequences, and prevailed on the king to revoke the permission which he had at first too inconsiderately granted.

However, the two princes of Conti paid no obedience to this interdict, but secretly left the kingdom, with the prince of Turenne, and prince Eugene, of Savoy. Many others had entered into a league to follow them, as soon as they could provide sufficient means to take the field and steal away after them.

But their design happened to be discovered, by the means of a page of one
of

of the princes, who had been dispatched privately to Paris, and was returning back with a large packet of letters, from their friends and confederates; which Monsieur de Louvois having received intimation of, had the courier arrested, just as he had reached the borders of the kingdom.

The dispatches were seized, and carried directly to the king, who among them had the sad mortification to meet with a letter from the princess of Conti, his favourite daughter, filled with satirical strictures against himself and Madame de Maintenon. Some from the duke of Rochefoucault, and others of the nobility, were in the same stile, and many more, breathing nothing but libertinism and impiety.

Among

Among the latter was one from the Marquis d'Alincourt, since duke de Villeroy, upon reading of which, the old Marechal de Villeroy, his grandfather, made this reflection, *Thank God, my grandson has only made free with his divine majesty; and God is more ready to pardon, than man.*

The king ordered all the scribes into exile, except the princess, whose punishment was rendered infinitely more irksome, by suffering the shame and humiliation of appearing every day in the presence of her king and father so justly irritated, and being obliged to throw herself on the clemency of a woman she had treated injuriously, in order to obtain her pardon.

Madame

Madame de Maintenon reproved her with a good deal of severity, not on account of what regarded herself, for she thought (with reason) that this part of her trespass, was, by the force of comparison, rendered too slight an offence for resentment; but all the while she was chastising her delinquency, she was using all her influence with the king, to procure her forgiveness, which, as he was naturally affectionate, and had always a particular fondness for this daughter, he was soon brought to pronounce.

However, his mind remained still extremely hurt, and it is certain that his affection for her was never the same, after this shock; and what helped to strengthen this disgust, was, that there scarce passed a day since, which was not marked

marked by some instance or other reprehensible in her manners or conduct.

[Such breaches in affection are extremely unfortunate, as they are never to be wholly repaired again. Common connexions, like air or water, blend together, after separation, as uniformly as before ; but ties of nature or of friendship, like flesh and blood, can never unite again, without leaving a cicatrice behind.]

The princes of Conti returned to France, after the defeat of the Turks; the eldest died, soon after, of the small-pox, as I have related before *; and the youngest was banished to Chantilly. But the prince of Condé, on his death-

* Page 4. of this vol. compare the passages.

bed,

bed, obtained from the king a remission of that sentence ; upon which the then prince of Conti returned to court, and married Mademoiselle de Bourbon, grand-daughter to the prince of Condé, which was an union long desired between their families.

This prince, who as I said before, had been educated with the dauphin, continued always upon such friendly and intimate terms with him, that it was generally thought if he had lived to be king, he would have been his first favourite, and prime minister.

As for the elder princess of Conti, she lost nothing by the small-pox, but a husband whom she regretted not ; and being a widow of eighteen, and a princess
of

of the blood, endowed with beauty and fortune, she had means enough to comfort herself. It was said that her brother-in-law had conceived a passion for her, and as he was perfectly agreeable, both in his person and address, it was not doubted but that their liking was mutual.

I was married, in eighty-six, to Monsieur de Caylus, one of the gentlemen of the bedchamber to the dauphin; but as I was then very young, hardly thirteen years old, Madame de Maintenon would not suffer me to be established yet at court. I was sent then to Paris, to reside with my mother-in-law; but the year after, I was granted an apartment at Versailles, and Madame de Maintenon placed me there, under the

care and matronage of Madame de Montchevreüil, heretofore mentioned and characterised.

I happened then to attach myself, contrary to the opinion and advice of Madame de Maintenon, to the duchess of Burgundy, afterwards dauphiness, and mother to Lewis the Fifteenth. It was in vain that she recommended it to me merely to pay a becoming respect to her highness, but never to enter deeply into any intimacy or engagement with her; that all the foibles or ill-conduct of the princess would be imputed to me, while the world would never give me credit, on the other hand, for the least portion of her good behaviour. I listened not to Madame de Maintenon, but surrendered my whole heart

heart and affections to that princess, without reserve, and had reason since to repent of my confidence.

The war was recommenced again in the spring of eighty-eight, by the siege of Philipsburgh ; and the king of England was driven from his throne, the winter following. The queen fled the kingdom first, with her son, the prince of Wales ; and by the singular fortune of Monsieur de Lauzun, he happened to be (critically for himself) in London, at that time, and had the merit imputed to him of assisting and conducting a flight, which the prince of Orange had rather favoured than opposed, as he had certainly got rid of his brother-in-law, upon less difficult terms, by this escape, than he could

possibly have done had he been made his prisoner.

Our king, however, rewarded Monsieur de Lauzun upon this occasion, as if he had rendered some material service to both the crowns. At the request of the king and queen of England, he created him a duke, and granted him permission to return again to court, where he had never appeared but once since his enlargement. The Duke of Orleans, upon this event, said, *That it was a bomb fallen over the heads of all the courtiers,* [alluding to the singular favour that Monsieur de Lauzun had formerly possessed in the friendship of the king.] But this happened to turn out no prophecy.

Monsieur

Monſieur de Montchevreüil was then governor of St. Germain's, and as I was confined a good deal with his wife, I had an opportunity of ſeeing this foreign court the more frequently. It may not then be ſo very extraordinary, if, having ſeen the prince of Wales grow up under my eye, being preſent at the birth of the princeſs, his ſiſter, and receiving many kindneſſes from the king and queen of England, I ſhould have continued a jacobite, ever ſince, notwithstanding the change of political principles in this country, with regard to that particular.

The queen of England, it has been ſaid, had given diſguſt by her haughtineſs, as much as by her religion, which ſhe profeſſed according to the Italian

G 3

mode,

mode, in attaching herself too scrupulously to a number of little trifling rites and ceremonies, perfectly useless any where, but more particularly improper to be insisted on in England. However, this princess had certainly very good sense in other things, and several qualities sufficient to engage the attachment and esteem of Madame de Maintenon, which continued to the end of their lives.

+ [This friendship was carried so far, by Madame de Maintenon, that she influenced the king (contrary to the opinion and advice of all his ministers) to acknowledge the prince of Wales as rightful heir to the crown of England.]

It is true, that Madame de Maintenon used to be often dissatisfied at the
little

little secrecy they preserved in all their affairs ; for any project for their re-establishment, was no sooner framed at Versailles, but it was known in London. But this was not the fault of their unfortunate majesties ; they were surrounded at St. Germain with followers that betrayed them ; particularly the queen's own woman, whom she placed too great a confidence in, and who used to steal the letters she received either from the king, her husband, when he was in Ireland, or from Madame de Maintenon, copy them while her mistress was in bed, and transmit them to England.

This woman's name was Strickland, mother to a little Abbé Strickland, who, in these later times, as becomes a true son of such a parent, made a push at a

G 4 cardinal's

cardinal's hat, by the sole means of hypocrisy, treachery, and intrigue.

I shall not undertake any account of the war, nor of the various successes of it, more or less happy for France, but always glorious for the arms of the king. These circumstances are treated of by many writers; and a woman, especially at the age I was of then, must have turned her attention naturally to matters of a more trifling concern.

The king went in person to the siege of Mons, in ninety-one. The princesses remained at Versailles; and Madame de Maintenon retired to St. Cyr, where she affected so intire a solitude, that she would not suffer even me to visit her there. I continued at Versailles, with
the

the princesses, and as we had no men among us, we amused ourselves with the less restraint.

The Duchess of Burgundy and the Princess of Conti had their different friends and parties; for as they had no great affection for one another, they kept their courts separately. Upon this occasion more particularly, the duchess exerted that happy and agreeable turn of humour and fancy, by which she usually contributed to her own entertainment, as well as to that of others.

She conceived an idea of writing a romance, and of transmitting the manners and characters of the present times, down to the future, under the names and supposed personages of the court
of

of Augustus. That of Julia had in itself so striking a resemblance to the princess of Conti, that she thought it sufficient to introduce it according to Ovid's description of it, without exposing it in the debauched colouring of the historians.

However, it must be allowed, that even with all this reserve, the allusion was well chosen, and most severely pointed. We had all of us our episodes, in the work, but with favourable parallels; especially with regard to those of our own party. This design was only sketched out, and a sort of rough draught made of it, for our own amusement solely; for we none of us thought seriously of carrying the whim any farther.

This

This was a very innocent way we took of amusing ourselves; and such exercises of wit and imagination are also a considerable advantage to the mind, and serve to occupy its leisure with safety, where idleness and roving thoughts might be dangerous. [Cards were not then the unnatural addictions of the young and gay.] +

During the next campaign, some of the ladies attended the king on the expedition, the principal of which were the Duchess of Orleans, the Princess of Conti, Madame de Maintenon, and Madame de Bouffles. The Duchess of Burgundy being with child, was left behind at Versailles; and though I was in the same circumstance, which prevented my attending Madame de Maintenon on that march, I was not permitted

mitted to stay with her, but was sent to mortify (as one may well imagine) with Madame de Montchevreuil, at St. Germain.

But one day that I took the liberty of paying a visit to her highness, I happened to lament my situation, and gave so lively a description of my old gouvernante, and her overstrained devotion, that it tempted the princess to convey the impression of it to her friend, Madame de Bouffolles; but in such a manner as rendered me great disservice with the king. He was curious to know upon what topics their correspondence turned, and unhappily this article relative to me fell into his hands.

He

He regarded this humorous portrait of Madame de Montchevreuil, that I considered but a mere sport of fancy, as a most heinous crime. I was charged with ingratitude and impiety; and so many others were led into a disadvantageous opinion of me, on this account, that I was obliged to quit the court, for some time. Thus did Madame de Maintenon's maxim turn out just, *that it is seldom safe to enter into unguarded intimacies with such sort of people.*

These things passed during the siege of Namur; but the ladies that attended the king proceeded no farther than Dinan. It was in this year also, that the action at Steinkerk happened, in which I lost one of my brothers, fighting at the head of the queen's dragoons.

The king returned to Versailles after the taking of Namur, and the winter did not betray the least trace of the war; for the court was as numerous, as magnificent, and as much immersed in pleasures, as ever, while Madame de Maintenon kept herself solely occupied at St. Cyr, in regulating and completing her foundation.

+ [Monsieur Boileau Despreaux wrote a fine poem, stiled, An Ode to the King, on the taking of this town, which was very humourously turned into a sort of burlesque parody, three years after, by Matthew Prior, upon King William's retaking it, though there were sixty thousand men in the garrison, and an hundred thousand French encamped in sight of it.]

The

The king celebrated the marriage of his youngest daughter, Mademoiselle de Blois, with the Duke of Chartres, son to Monsieur the Duke of Orleans, who joined their hands, not only without constraint, but even with the most perfect concurrence, though Madame was said to be extremely averse to the match, and to have made several vain and unseemly efforts to oppose it.

And indeed it were much to be wished, for the honour of the king, as I have before hinted, that he had not consented to such an alliance for his own nephew, and one so nearly in succession to the crown. But his other marriages of the same kind, had served as a precedent for this.

I re-

I remember to have heard, indeed, at that time, that it was a match of love intirely, on the duke's side.—I complimented Mademoiselle de Blois once, upon this report, and she surprized me with replying, in her usual sleepy tone of voice, *I am perfectly indifferent in that particular; I shall be sufficiently satisfied if he marries me.* [It is a pity
+ she should ever have had that satisfaction.]

The late Monsieur would have preferred the princess of Conti, then a widow, to Mademoiselle de Blois; and I believe that the king would have consented to the union, if she had chosen it herself. But her answer to Monsieur, was, *That her liberty was dearer to her than any other consideration in life.*

How-

However, notwithstanding this refusal, though strange it may appear, she could not help feeling a good deal of mortification, at seeing a sister, by so many years younger, elevated so much above her. But I must say, to the honour of the duchess, that she resented not this mean jealousy, which might have piqued any other woman, for I have heard her declare upon the mention of it, that if any one was to step into a rank superior to her own, it would make her ample amends, that it was her sister.

She was the more worthy for having such a sentiment, as there never had been much cordial affection between them, though they grew fond of one another, soon after, and appeared to have

formed a strong connexion together ; but the common favourites of both, in a little time, embroiled them with each other, so far, as to render them irreconcilable, for the rest of their lives. To this quarrel may be attributed a great part of our misfortunes at court.

In order to draw the character of the Duke of Orleans justly, it would require a singular, and a sharp pencil. Of all that we have seen in him, and of all that he would make appear, there was nothing of reality, except his understanding, which it must be confessed was masterly—He had a quick conception, great penetration, much discernment, a strong memory, and fluent elocution. But he was unhappily of a very depraved disposition, considered

sidered virtue as an empty sound, and that the world was divided between fools and men of sense; that morals, religion, and virtue were the implicit faith of the former; but that the latter paid only an outward respect to them, with a view merely of serving their own purposes.

This prince had received the most liberal education, and as in youth the accomplishments of wit and address serve often to cover the defects of the heart, the world had conceived great expectations of his merit. I remember that Madame de Maintenon, upon the report of his preceptors, used to prophesy that in the person of the Duke of Chartres, which was his title then, there would step forth a nobleman of

such unmodern merit as would be capable, from his single and singular example, to render sense and virtue fashionable, in the higher ranks of life.

But this young man was no sooner married, and became his own master, than he was seen to deliver himself over, not only to those vices which were natural to him, but even to adopt others, which his inclinations had never before excited him to. He drank, without loving wine; and intrigued, without passion, or even galantry.

The Duke of Maine was married, at the same time, to a grand-daughter of the great Condé. The eldest had been married to the prince of Conti, younger brother to the one that had died of the small-

small-pox lately. The Duchess of Maine was the youngest of the two daughters that remained unmarried, but was preferred on account of her being a thought taller, than the other.

Her sister greatly resented this affront, and preserved her remembrance of it as long as she lived. For my part I thought that the duke had made the worst choice between them, for though there might have been some small difference in their height, the other was better made, and blessed also with a gentler and more amenable disposition. [But the mildest of us never forgive a slight.] †

I have already given the character of the Duchess of Maine, who, added to

her haughtiness and over-ruling temper,
 possessed a sort of ill-natured wit that
 was frequently making her enemies.
 She used to stile the Duke of Maine's
 sisters, Mademoiselle de Nants, and
 Mademoiselle de Blois, with the widow
 Princess of Conti, *puppets of blood*, [al-
 luding to their being not born to, but
 adopted into rank, first by creation,
 and next by marriage.] Nor did the re-
 flection of her own condescension, in
 marrying a *puppet* herself, serve to re-
 strain her pertness. And when her
 brother's marriage with Mademoiselle
 de Nants was declared, she said some
 ridiculous things, upon the occasion,
 that were remembered; and this was
 another of the causes of those disgusts
 and strifes, which afterwards disturbed
 the royal family.

The

The Duke of Bourbon had some princely qualities, with good sense, and an approved bravery. He loved the king, and respected the constitution. Far from being swayed by that sordid self-interest, which had been ever a reproach to the Condé family, he was just, generous, and disinterested; and gave an instance of this character, on the death of his father, when the government of Burgundy devolved on him. The late duke had exacted a considerable sum, from that province, independent of his claim as vice-roy; but on the son's succession, he restored every shilling of it to the people again.

He had, however, several faults and foibles in him. There was a brutal harshness in his manners; and though

he had some wit, he rendered himself a disagreeable companion, by his tedious manner of telling a story, or explaining himself to his hearers. This was unlucky for him, as he was fond of ingenious company, and they shunned him..

No man had a face and person less formed for galantry, and yet he was always giving himself the airs of a person of deep intrigue. He loved his wife much better than any of those he would be thought to have had success with, and yet affected to treat her with indifference; he was extremely jealous of her, but avoided the appearance of it, as much as possible.

However, to take him all in all, both the duchess and the nation have suffered

suffered an irreparable loss, in his death. His failings were not known, except to those who had conversed familiarly with him; and his good qualities might have been very serviceable to France, on the death of Lewis the Fourteenth; by whom, however, he was more esteemed, than loved; because, in truth, he was more estimable, than agreeable.

The Prince of Conti, who had married his eldest sister, was the very reverse of him; for though he possessed wit, courage, and other good qualities, he was generally thought to be more agreeable, than estimable; he was a better companion than a friend, and there never was (I need not say a prince only, but any other man in the world) who was master of so high a talent of pleasing in conversation.

He

He was said to have wanted liberality, but as the narrowness of his fortune had put it out of his power to display much generosity, this charge against him may be rather construed into a compliment, by shewing that *he was not extravagant.*

His person was not much in his favour; it was large, but not well made; however, he had some grace in his figure, his countenance was agreeable, and his whole appearance was engaging, to which his spirit, wit, and manner greatly contributed.

The Duke of Bourbon neither loved him naturally, nor *supernaturally*, on account of the jealousy he had conceived, about his galantries with the duchess;
how-

however, he endeavoured to copy him, in many particulars, and would often pretend to have been just going to say the very same things he happened to utter.

The Prince of Conti, before the improper passion he had conceived for his sister-in-law, had never been capable of a serious attachment in his life. He had had several galant engagements indeed, in which he betrayed rather more of vanity, than of love. But his devotion to her had no hypocrisy in it.

Perhaps the resemblance of their humours, dispositions, and talents, with the apprehensions that the Bourbon family betrayed about this amour, might have given them both the first
hint

hint of it. It is certain, at least, that the suspicions of the old Prince of Condé, the precautions of the old princess, with the inquietudes of the duke himself, notwithstanding his affectation of indifference about the matter, had for some time preceded the public notice of this intrigue.

+ [As marriages are said to be often brought about, by talking of them, possibly affairs of galantry may be so too. The turning two peoples attention more particularly on each other, may sometimes produce this effect.— It is therefore a nice and difficult matter to know how to conduct one's self in this latter case, even where the attachment has commenced without such hints. The friend, parent, or husband should

should endeavour to prevent, without seeming to suspect the amour; for difficulties alone are apt to strengthen passion, and much more so when they are seen to arise from opposition; besides, that a certainty of suspicion renders the parties themselves the more artful to prevent detection.]

The Duchess of Bourbon had been a long time married, and her beauty had made a noise in the world, before the Prince of Conti had seemed to shew her any particular attention. Several other persons had paid homage to her charms, in the mean time, but none of them were thought to attach her regards, except the Count de Mailly; from which report I shall not pretend to vindicate her, any farther, than by saying
 3 that

that though I passed most of my time with her, at that æra, I never observed the least circumstance in her behaviour, to justify the scandal.

I saw very plainly that the count had conceived a passion for her, and used to take notice of it sometimes to the duchess herself, in jest, to which she always replied in the same stile of joke and merriment. Madame de Maintenon though has spoken to him on this subject, before me, but more severely; and he used to relieve himself from her remonstrances, by some lively pleasantry or other, which generally succeeded with Madame de Maintenon, when supported with wit or humour.

However, alarmed, at length, with the currency of this report, and fearing
that

that it might reach the king's ears, and mar his preferment at court, the count pretended for a while to attach himself to another lady ; which stratagem succeeded so far as to alarm that person's family and friends, who being people of some consideration at court, applied to Madame de Maintenon to use her influence in putting a stop to his further addresses in that quarter.

This was all the effect that the count desired, from his courtship ; and he therefore told Madame de Maintenon, when she rated him upon this subject, that he hoped she was now convinced he had no engagement elsewhere ; and he then put an end to the pretence or reality of that pursuit, for the future.

At

At length the Prince of Conti began to open his eyes on the charms of the Duchess of Bourbon, by the mere force of being often told that it was a surprise to every one he had not yet seemed to admire them. In fine, he afterwards conceived a strong passion for her; and if, on her part, she ever really loved any one, it was certainly him.

It has been said, and I think not without great shew of reason, that this prince, who had never till then been sensible to any thing but his glory, or his pleasures, became so infatuated with the attractions of the Duchess of Bourbon, that he sacrificed a throne to the violence of his affection for her.

He had been elected King of Poland, by a great majority of voices, and proclaimed

claimed by the states, through the intrigues of Cardinal Polignac—Augustus, elector of Saxony, was opposed to him by the minority; but it is universally believed that he would have been unanimously chosen, had he attended his election himself; and that even after the poll he would have secured the crown, had he appeared in the kingdom and put himself at the head of his friends, time enough before the intrigues of the emperor and the pope, supported by the Saxon troops, had had leisure to defeat his title.

But the excess of his love abated the ardour of his ambition, and he delayed his journey to Dantzic, till it was too late to establish his claim. However, as this was not so very evident, at the time, he

was at length prevailed upon to set out; and as he actually thought himself, that he was then taking his leave of France, for life, the parting between him and the duchess, was the most sad and tender scene, they say, that ever was seen.

They had a confidant, in their amour, against whom, the jealousy and resentment of the duke, could not prevail; + [but I am ashamed to tell the world that this was the dauphin.] And I believe that there had never been any one else admitted into the secret; for this affair had been, all through, carried on with so much caution and conduct, that no certainty of the matter could ever be obtained; insomuch that the old Princess of Condé, with the abused princess of Conti, were at last brought to believe

lieve that they had originally no other cause for suspecting this amour, but that the supposed lovers seemed formed by nature for each other.

[The mean part that the dauphin acted, in this affair, was unworthy of a man; ignoble in a prince; but infinitely more infamous in a brother. If he only concurred in this amour, out of resentment to the Duke of Bourbon, with whom he was then on adverse terms, this but adds to the baseness of the deed. — There should be a generosity in our enmities, as well as in our friendships — an act of vileness cannot be justified by hate, when even love itself can never excuse it.]

The Prince of Conti did not long console himself, in his passion, for the

loss of his crown; for soon after his return from Poland his constitution became impaired, and he fell into a languishment of health and spirits that put an end to his life, in about three or four years after; infinitely regretted by all France, but particularly his friend and mistress, the dauphin, and the princess of Bourbon.

She had occasion for the whole command which she was generally mistress
 + of, [over her *appearances* at least,] to conceal from the duke the excess of her grief, on the prince of Conti's death, which was so much the easier for her to succeed in, as I believe that he was himself so much rejoiced at getting rid both of such a rival and such a second, that he neither chose to retrospect into past
 circum-

circumstances, nor to dive too deeply into the real state of his wife's affections.

From that æra the duke and duchess lived together in the utmost concord imaginable; her character and conduct became from that moment irreproachable. She brought about a reconciliation between him and the dauphin, which in all appearance would have arisen to a perfect friendship in a little time, if too sudden a death had not carried him off, just at a time, when, as I said before, he was the most necessary to France, to his own house, and to the views of his wife.

She appeared infinitely afflicted at his loss, and I believe that she really felt so.

No other passion but ambition, possessed her heart and mind, after the death of the Prince of Conti; and the Duke of Bourbon was master of all the qualities that might have encouraged her hopes in that particular; for it was hardly possible for the situation of the royal family to have taken any turn in politics, in which the Duke of Bourbon might not have been at liberty to have chosen his party, and have taken the lead in it. He had an equal capacity for the camp and cabinet; and the dauphin was totally under the influence of the duchess.

The favour of the duchess with the dauphin increased after the duke's death, so greatly, that he seldom passed an evening out of her company—and the Duke of Berry, his third son, in order
to

to ingratiate himself with his father, affected frequently to attend him on his visits at her apartments.

As the duchess happened, just at that time, to introduce her daughters into life, and that they were frequently of these parties, it was imagined that she had formed a design of making a match between Mademoiselle de Bourbon and the Duke of Berry—at least, they made this a pretence for hastening the conclusion of that prince's marriage with Mademoiselle d'Orleans.

It is certain that Madame de Maintenon took part in the same alarm; and that her friendship for the Princess of Burgundy made her apprehend the too great credit of the Duchess of Bourbon

with the dauphin, her father-in-law. She could not imagine, without extreme resentment, that the princess might possibly one day see herself abandoned by the whole court, and behold them crouching at the feet of the *widow Bourbon*, in compliment to the dauphin.

+ [Might not this apprehension have been a sort of *foregone conclusion*, in the *widow Scarron*?]

But she perceived in the duchess so great a resemblance to the character, views, and dispositions of Madame de Montespan, that it determined her intirely on the side of the Orleans family, which she strengthened considerably by the means of this alliance. And in reality she ever exerted the whole of that influence, which her situation at court had

had endowed her with, in preserving the balance even, between the several members of the royal family, and its political connections.

[This generous conduct in Madame de Maintenon was honourably remembered to her, after the king's death, by the Duke of Orleans, then regent. It is an incredible fact that Lewis the Fourteenth had made no provision for her, on his death : but the regent desired her to name her own terms, upon that event ; and she behaved on this occasion according to the virtue and moderation which she had ever shewn through life, in limiting herself to a pension of four score thousand livres a year * ; which he

* Between six and seven thousand pounds a year ; as I think the livre was then rated at twenty-pence.

had,

had, I may say, both the justice and gratitude to have confirmed to her during the remainder of her life, which was but about three years and a half that she outlived the king.]

But I recollect, just this instant, that I have never yet given any account of the Duchess of Burgundy, except a word or so, *en passant*—suffer me to supply that deficiency, in this place.

This princess was brought into France between the age of ten and eleven years old. Her great youth, and the earnest request of the Duchess of Savoy, her mother, made Madame de Maintenon take her particularly under her charge. Besides the interest of the king, and of all France, as she was

then destined to be married to the Duke of Burgundy, heir presumptive to the crown, engaged her still more to bestow her utmost attention toward the perfecting of that education which the duchess had so well commenced.

For to speak the truth, I have often heard Madame de Maintenon say, that no young woman of quality could ever have been better formed and instructed than the Princess of Savoy. *She would have been spoiled among us, she used to say, if the good principles she brought along with her, had been less strongly impressed*.*

* From this character of her, I cannot conceive why Madame de Maintenon should have so strongly objected to her niece's entering into any intimacy with her, as before related. The circumstance of the letter had surely no malice in it.

Madame

Madame de Maintenon then, was put into possession of this princess, from the moment she arrived here ; and she, whether from nature or principle, paid an implicit respect and obedience to her sentiments and direction. She was, till her marriage, and for some time, even after, kept separate from the other princesses, and the rest of the court. Madame de Maintenon formed her entirely under the eye of the king, and surrounded her as much as possible with persons of merit. She appointed the Duchess de Lude to be her lady of the bedchamber, the Countess de Mailly her attire woman, and her maids of honour were chosen from among the young ladies of the best families and characters, in the kingdom ; or at least those who were looked upon in that light by Madame de Maintenon.

The

The Duchess de Lude had a dignity in her appearance, and a deference for Madame de Maintenon, which served her in the place of sense or understanding. All that was requisite in her station was a decent observance of forms, which was in reality all she was capable of ; and she was only placed there in order to render a servile account of the minutest article that ever happened within her department, constantly to Madame de Maintenon.

The other princesses, who saw that Madame de Maintenon kept her ward at such a distance from their society, resented it extremely to her ; and particularly the Duchess of Bourbon, who had originally no great affection for her ; though less on account of her having rivalled

rivalled Madame de Montespan, her mother, than of her having formerly taken the matronly liberty of giving her advice, and censuring some parts of her conduct. Which freedom, however, proceeded not from any impertinent officiousness in Madame de Maintenon's disposition, but from a real good intention of rendering her manners agreeable to the king, her father.

Madame de Maintenon, it is true, was particularly on her guard in this instance against the Duchess of Bourbon, thinking, very justly, that her conversation and example might have been highly dangerous, and have blasted, in an instant, the intire fruit of all the time and pains she had laid out on the Princess of Savoy. She
therefore

therefore took care that she should be in company with that duchess as little as possible, even in public, but never, upon any account, in private.

She was not so much averse, though, to the Duchess of Orleans, whose speech and manners were more unexceptionable, and who had also more respect for Madame de Maintenon. Besides, both she and the princess were surrounded by women attached to the Duchess of Orleans, who used to represent her always in the most favourable light, and exaggerated maliciously every thing that the Duchess of Bourbon either said or did, and frequently charged her with others that she had never thought of.

I have heard the Duchess of Bourbon affirm, at the time that the Duke of Berry's

Berry's marriage was declared, that she had never solicited, nor even given the most distant hint to the dauphin, about an alliance between his royal highness and Mademoiselle de Bourbon. And in reality the dauphin was by no means a person proper to make such a proposition to, as he would never have entered into any scheme in life, without first consulting the king.

The duchess, who knew him well, had too much art to suffer him even to imagine that she had ever conceived the least thought of this matter. It is not improbable, though, but that as the king was then old, she might have imagined that on his death, if the Duke of Berry should not be married, she might then have been able to have worked
her

her purpose with the dauphin, in favour of one of her daughters—but in waiting for such an event, she had certainly prudence enough to have kept her mind to herself.

And, really, to consider this matter in a political light, though Mademoiselle d'Orleans ought to have been preferred, before any one of a younger branch; yet it was neither natural nor prudent, after the behaviour of the Duke of Orleans, in Spain, to make any alliance between his house and a prince at so short a distance from the crown, and brother also to the King of Spain.

And it was much to be wished either that the king had not suffered the Duke of Berry to have yet married, as there

was no political occasion for it, or that he had fixed upon some other alliance for him. It should neither have been a daughter of the Duchess of Orleans, nor one of the Duchess of Bourbon; first, on account of the bastardy of their mothers; but there was still a stronger reason against the former, whose father had had private intelligence with the enemies of the crown of Spain, at the very time that he was at the head of an army to preserve that crown to Philip the Fifth, elder brother to the Duke of Berry.

But to pass by in silence all that had been said about certain poisonings, and the duke's whole conduct in Spain, his treaty with England was sufficient alone to have had him attainted and prosecuted

secuted to justice; and it had, I think, been sufficient clemency in the king, merely to have pardoned his treachery, without connecting him so much nearer to his person, by the means of such an alliance.

But the destiny of France ruled it otherwise. This king, so wise and provident in other things, consented to a marriage which he had reason to repent of soon after. The dauphin acceded to the alliance, from that dutiful and respectful deference which he always shewed to every desire of the king, and that with so good a grace, that he did not appear in the least dissatisfied with the match, though it was thought he did not much approve of it.

The Duchess of Burgundy was delighted with this event. She regarded this marriage as her own work, and imagined that it would insure the peace and happiness of her life, after the death of the king. But it was hardly completed before she met with sufficient cause to be sorry for it.

The Duchess of Berry threw aside all manner of restraint as soon as she found herself her own mistress; and it was really a matter of great surprize then, that with such a character and temper, as she betrayed so immediately after, she could possibly have had it in her power to have constrained her dispositions so well as she did, for the two years that preceded her marriage; except that having gained her favourite

7

point,

point, she scorned to disguise her inclinations further. She shewed herself then the very first day after her marriage, just as she was in her own nature ; that is, a second queen of Navarre, in her manners ; to which she joined a shameful love of wine, with a boundless ambition — a passion very rarely met with in dissolute minds.

But it must be confessed, that she had been unhappily reared in a manner most likely to afford her bad qualities the fullest scope. Her father had, from her very childhood, conceived the most remarkable fondness for her, imaginable ; and as she grew up made her the confidante of all his tastes and passions, as well as a witness to his most private actions. She used to be of the

parties with his mistresses, and generally made a third with Madame d'Argenton and him. Nay, he carried his debaucheries to such an excess, that he once exercised his skill in painting, by drawing the person of his daughter quite naked.

Notwithstanding so profligate an education as I have just hinted at, she retained such a power over herself, for two years, while her marriage was in agitation, that the Duchess of Burgundy and Madame de Maintenon heard nothing every day but of the mildness, decency, and propriety of her whole demeanour.

The Duchess of Orleans, who most ardently wished to have this alliance
take

take effect, and fearing that it might never obtain while the girl remained at Paris or St. Cloud, under the baneful influence of her father's example, carried her off to Versailles, to place her under the more immediate observation of the Duchess of Burgundy and Madame de Maintenon.

Here that young princess, who was thoroughly apprized that her future fortunes depended on her conduct in that situation, took the most artful care imaginable to exhibit herself in a light that sufficiently recommended her to their choice and approbation.

Nay, even some time before she was removed to Versailles, from eleven years of age, finding that she had a disposi-

tion toward growing fat, and fearing, that if she should continue the manner of life which her father had generally indulged her in, it might possibly mar her views, by affecting her person and beauty, she took the resolution, of herself, to eat, drink, or sleep but little, and to use a vast deal of exercise for the future.

One might imagine that so young a person, capable of taking and acting strictly up to such a resolution, though naturally a sluggard and a glutton, from the sole motive of ambition, without having been laid under any restriction by those who had the authority to controul her, must have become, in time, a female Machiavel, a person of such deep dissimulation, and political intrigue

as

as might have rendered her one day dangerous to the state.

But she stopped short, at her first stage, and having once secured her marriage, grew instantly tired of the restraint she had so long imposed upon her indulgencies; and thinking nothing worth the pain of mortifying her passions, she most shamefully got drunk with her father, two days after her wedding, at an entertainment he gave to the Duchess of Burgundy, at St. Cloud, in the presence of that princess, and before her mother, her husband, and several other respectable persons of the court. Not content at having drank to an excess, at table, when the company rose the father and daughter retired into a little parlour, and finished their debauch there;

there; so that the astonished Duchess of Burgundy had the shame and mortification of carrying her back again to Versailles, in that beastly condition.

I shall not mention after what manner she betrayed her other inclinations; it is sufficient to say, that she lost no time in exposing them to the world. But I shall pass on to the story of the earrings, which have made so much noise, and which, if one was to give credit to the common opinion, was the cause of such unhappy consequences.

The Duchess of Orleans, her mother, had a pair of remarkable fine diamond ear-rings, that *Monsieur*, the late duke, had received as a present from Anne of Austria, the late queen-mother; and
had

had left as a legacy to his daughter-in-law. These jewels the present duke laid his hands on, and bestowed to the Duchess of Berry.

The thing itself, but perhaps the manner more, might have been disagreeable to her, but she was certainly in the wrong, knowing the two persons as well as she did, to make such a bustle about it. She told the story to every one, shed tears plentifully, and even laid her complaint before the king, who reprimanded the Duchess of Berry severely for it. The Duchess of Burgundy happened, unfortunately, to engage in the quarrel, and took part with the Duchess of Orleans.

[This article, with some others of the same kind, hinted at before in these
memoirs,

memoirs, may serve to shew the genius of the French, in a singular light. Women enter deeper into the political system, here, than they do in any other nation of Europe; and both their quarrels and intrigues have frequently caused disturbances in the state. Our sex is excluded from the crown; but in revenge has found a way (if I may be allowed a turn upon the word) to *supersede* the Salic law, and mount an higher throne, *by ruling those that govern.*]

From that time the Duchess of Burgundy and the Duchess of Berry were never upon any sort of friendly terms together, though at the beginning, the first did not so much consider the other as her sister-in-law, but as her very child. She gave her advice, and endeavoured
to

to form her as she had been herself, in such a manner as would have rendered her agreeable to the king. Such sentiments and dispositions are rare, not only in a princess, but even in any common woman. But the Duchess of Burgundy, whom we may now stile dauphiness, was not one; and if this princess had some defects and foibles in her character, she had certainly many noble qualities, and her social converse was most charming.

The world can seldom be brought to believe that princes can ever act simply or naturally, because they have not the opportunity of seeing them near enough to be judges of them; and because, likewise, the marvellous, which mankind delight in, is not to be met with in a plain conduct, or common sentiments.

The

The public, then, were more inclined to suppose that the dauphiness resembled her father, and that she was even at the age of eleven years old when she was first brought from Savoy, as artful and politic as he; and that she only pretended for the king and Madame de Maintenon a dutiful tenderness and affection, which she was in reality insensible of toward them.

But I have had the honour of being particularly intimate with her, and am therefore more capable of framing a judgment in this matter, than others at a distance can possibly be supposed to be; and I have seen her, upon speaking of those two persons, weep so sincerely, on account of their great age, which must so soon deprive her of their society and

and protection, [that I must myself have had an heart to be ashamed of, could I but for an instant have harboured a doubt of her real affection for them both.] +

But she was young, a woman, and a natural coquet; any one of which articles had been sufficient to have supplied frequent trifling circumstances in her situation and conduct, that it might have been prudent in her to have endeavoured to conceal: but is this to be deemed either art or hypoerisy? And in order to her further justification, I must declare, what I know to be a fact, that many of the indiscretions imputed to her, she has been drawn into by others; and that the greatest weakness I ever observed in her, was, her being

too

too supple, and liable to be led too much by the young persons who happened to get access to her. This facility of disposition has, sometimes, to my knowledge, been attended with circumstances and consequences that have been a disadvantage to her character.

Two men are mentioned, whom she has been said to have conceived a sort of partiality for, in her life. The first was a madman, Monsieur de Maulevrier, who went off to Spain when she was but a child, where he was ridiculous enough to conceive a passion for the queen, her sister. I did not know him, because I was not then at court, but I have heard accounts of him since, sufficient to enable me to pronounce that passions were phrenzies in him, both from their excess, and

and the methods he employed toward their gratification. Till at length he compleated his character, in the manner of his death, which was by throwing himself out of a window.

However, as he had a good deal of spirit and wit in his manners and conversation, he imposed, for a considerable time, on persons of the best understandings. Even Madame de Maintenon had conceived an extraordinary opinion of him, which was manifest from the frequent particular audiences she used to indulge him in.

Madame de Maulevrier, daughter to the Marechal de Tessé, who lived in perfect friendship with the dauphiness till the unfortunate death of her husband,

made a breach with her, soon after, on a pretence that she had refused to deliver up the letters which had passed in a correspondence supposed to have been held between the princess and Monsieur de Maulevrier. But it is certain that she spread this report against the dauphiness out of some particular malice or design, the private history of which has never been sufficiently cleared up.

However that might have been, they continued ever after, at enmity with each other, though her father was master of the horse to the princess, and the person whom the king had confided in when he first formed the scheme of marrying her to his grandson.

Monsieur de Nangis was the second person who is said to have been distinguished

tinguished by her highness. He was of a very different character from the other ; and I shall venture to admit thus far, that she might possibly have been sensible of a sort of *tender friendship* toward this gentleman ; but I most peremptorily dissent from the general opinion in this matter, which supposes an intrigue to have been the consequence of this preference. For I am convinced, both from situation and circumstance, that this amour had never proceeded any farther than liking, esteem, and a few galant letters.

I shall just mention the two reasons upon which my opinion has been formed. In the first place, every action of the dauphiness was always too carefully attended to by the people placed immediately

diately about her person by Madame de Maintenon—and in the next, Monsieur de Nangis, happened to have been at that æra too much in love with another lady, who kept a constant and jealous watch over all his movements; and who has often assured me, in confidence, that at the very times when Monsieur de Nangis has been suspected to have been in private with the princess, he has been sitting tête à tête with herself.



HERE

[**H**ERE Madame de Caylus finishes her narrative abruptly, which, in many places, I have rather re-wrote, than translated; and in several other passages have been obliged to leave out, or put in some word or expression, in order to render the text intelligible; which I thought to be a better method than encumbering it with notes.

Among the number of characters she has here drawn, I am surprized that she has neglected to treat us with more particular ones of the two principal personages in her memoirs, namely, Lewis the Fourteenth, and Madame de Maintenon, of whom she only sketches out a few detached features, occasionally, as she finds them necessary to explain some other parts of her drama.

† Possibly she might have thought, and very justly too, that though some lines in their portraits must naturally give one both a love and esteem for their persons, yet too philosophic a disquisition into their natures might not, perhaps, redound so much to the advantage of their respective characters.

† Lewis was a *monarch*, but no *heroe*. He was liberal and magnificent, an able politician, and a generous patron of arts and sciences. But had he succeeded to the throne, in the circumstances of his grandfather, he would never have sat upon it. He wanted the bravery, fortitude, magnanimity, and perseverance, of Henry the Fourth, and would have lived and died a *pretender*.

He

He had a passion for glory, but this arose rather from vanity than ambition; and had too much of the antient barbarity mixed up with it; the greatness of an action supplying the place of the justice or advantage of it, with him. His behaviour to the republic of Venice, was a vain-glorious, inglorious proceeding, unbecoming of a brave or a politic prince. It was sufficient to have rendered that state a perpetual enemy to himself, to his family, and to his nation. +

A warlike resentment of injury, or a rivalry of dominion may subsist for ever between powers, without personal resentment or national enmity; but insolence, like a blow, can never be forgiven, till returned, or revenged. I should be apt to suspect the meanness of that soul, +

which would not itself be shocked at a base submission exacted by it from its equal.

+ *Lewis le Grand*, like some other great persons recorded in story, happened to have lived too long—for he unhappily survived his family, his fortune, and his fame.

+ Maintenon was endowed with a disposition of mind, and a regulation of conduct extremely fit to serve her interests in this life, and, I hope, to insure them in the next. She was uniformly good, in herself, but her goodness principally related to that same self. She was willing enough, it is true, to do kind offices for others, in cases indifferent, but was incapable of friendship at
the

the minutest hazard of her own concerns.

Her whole power and influence during her elevation were expended solely on the maintenance of that station, and the security of its emoluments. If prudence, as it is deemed by some mean minded philosopher, be the pantheon of virtue, Madame de Maintenon certainly bids fairest for the most perfect character I know of. Even her chastity was but a portion of her prudence, not her virtue, and more a *measure* than a moral—this latter part of her character is, I think, sufficiently vouched by a passage in one of her own letters to her confessor, preserved at St. Cyr, written at the time of Lewis's courtship. “ I always take care
 “ to send his majesty away *disappointed*
 “ and

“ and *dissatisfied* — but never *despond-*
“ *ing.*”

Are not such evolutions as these the
arts of a finished martinet in intrigue ?
but it satisfied the consciences of the
devotée and her divine, both, ^{thoughts} it seems,
that it was but fair play to stake her
chastity against a crown.

Her religion was but ritual ; it might
have been *Catholic*, but not *universal* :
it wanted charity, it was limited to a
sect—it was *priestian*, rather than *chris-*
tian. Hence arose her discontents, and
her so oft lamented tediousness of life.
For a religion merely mechanical is not
sufficient to support the wearied soul
throughout its languors.

I shall

I shall now conclude this translation
with the words of Voltaire, at the end
of his anecdotes of the age of Lewis
the Fourteenth :

“ Such a detail of minute particu-
“ lars may possibly appear impertinent,
“ to a philosopher ; but curiosity, the
“ universal foible of mankind, almost
“ ceases to be one, when it has for
“ its object those times and persons,
“ which attract the attention of pos-
“ terity.”]

A P P E N

A P P E N D I X.

BY THE

TRANSLATOR.

[JUST as this work was finished at the press, the bookseller (from whom I had bought the French of Madame de Caylus) sent me a preface and some notes, which had been extracted from an edition published lately at Geneva, and said to have been written by Monsieur de Voltaire.

+ I was sorry that I had not received them time enough to have introduced them in their proper places; but as every thing that bears the name, though even without the *stamp*, of that author, as is sometimes the case, becomes a matter of
of

of curiosity with the public ; I shall present them here with a translation of the preface, by way of appendix, in order to render these volumes as compleat as I can, in every particular.]

PREFACE.

P R E F A C E.

B Y

MONSIEUR DE VOLTAIRE.

T HIS work of Madame de Caylus is one of those which affords the best interior view of the Court of Lewis the Fourteenth. The more simple and negligent the stile of it appears, the more one feels themselves interested by its naïveté. She does not seem to exert herself, as the Duke d'Antin has remarked. She was one of the small number of women, who have wit and sentiment, without affecting to display them.

It

It has been a considerable loss to us, that her memory was not stronger, and that she should have dismissed the reader just where he had reason to expect she would have entered into the particulars relative to the latter years of Lewis the Fourteenth's life, and to the regency, which succeeded that period.

Possibly the inquisitious and philosophic spirit which reigns in the present world, may not be contented with the trifling court anecdotes that are the subject of these memoirs ; readers would, perhaps, chuse to be informed what were the political causes of their wars ; what the re-
sources

sources of their finances; how their marine department came to fall into decay, after having once arrived at the highest point of consideration that it was ever known to have arisen to in any other nation ; to what extremities Lewis the Fourteenth was latterly reduced; how he sustained his difficulties, and by what means his affairs came to be retrieved again; in what confusion the king's confessor, La Tellier, had involved all France; and what part Madame de Maintenon had taken in these intestine troubles, which were as shocking and shameful as those of La Fronde had been violent and absurd.*

** What says England to this gasconade?*

But

But as all these subjects had been already fully set forth in The History of the Age of Lewis the Fourteenth, one may be much better entertained here with the details of lighter circumstances, which may serve to let us into the characters of many persons who are still remembered among us —*

[* What a fond partiality Monsieur de Voltaire seems to have here for his own works. It had been more just and modest both, to have referred the reader to those original authors to whom he was himself obliged for the materials which compose his *Siecle de Louis XIV.* But he would be *original*, even where he *copies*. The King of Prussia said once, Voltaire would be an extraordinary man—and an *extraordinary* man he most certainly is!]

and more so, as these particulars may often help us to investigate the mystery of several great events.

In general, the trifling memoirs of courts which cotemporaries are usually so inquisitous after, come to lose their consequence with the generation that was interested in them; but there are epochas and courts, of which almost every incident remains for many ages the object of curiosity and attention. The æra of Augustus was one of these; and the annals of Lewis the Fourteenth comprehended many articles as worthy the notice of fame and history, though performed upon a theatre more limited, and less elevated.

The

The domain of Lewis the Fourteenth extended but to a province of Augustus' empire; but notwithstanding, France, under this reign, had acquired so great repute in arms, in its laws, in its public foundations of every kind, in the liberal arts and sciences, and in the refinement, even of its pleasures, that its lustre gilded the most inconsiderable anecdotes of a court that has ever since been regarded as the most perfect model of courts, and the memory of which will be always held precious with posterity.

Every fact related by Madame de Caylus is true; and she speaks always

with candor. Her remembrances may also serve to make us forget that heap of wretched memoirs of the Court of Lewis the Fourteenth, with which all Europe has been imposed on by a parcel of famished authors who had never seen either the court or the city.

Madame de Caylus, who was niece to Madame de Maintenon, speaks of what she had seen herself, or received upon sufficient authority from others, and with such an air of frankness and veracity, as must totally destroy the credit of those impositions I am alluding to ; and particularly the mock memoirs of Madame de Maintenon,
compiled

compiled with the extremest ignorance and absurdity, besides being written in the mean stile of those common novels that insult the public, every day, and which should never be admitted into any library beyond an antechamber.

What are we to think of a person who hazards the giving offence to the greatest families in the kingdom, by constantly confounding names and facts ; who pronounces (with an air of confidence) that Monsieur de Maisons, first president of the parliament of Paris, with many others of the members, waited only for the least hint from the Duke de Maine to declare

themselves against the regency of the Duke of Orleans; when it is notoriously known that Monsieur de Maisons, who was never first president, was the very person who framed the intire plan of the regency.

Who pretends that the Princess des Ursins, at the age of sixty-one, had inspired Philip the Fifth, King of Spain, with a violent passion for her person.

Who dares to advance that the secret articles of the treaty of Radstadt had excluded Philip the Fifth from the throne, as if there ever had been any secret articles entered into, at that convention?

Who

Who has had the impudence to affirm that Monseigneur, the dauphin, had married Mademoiselle de Chouin, and upon the credit of this falsity, repeats all the absurd stories that had been before invented by the catch-penny booksellers of Holland!

Who to gain credit to such tales as these, quotes the example of Augustus, who, as he takes upon him to inform us, was in love with Cleopatra—you may see his great knowledge in history from this passage!

It is by such methods as these, that the generality of our secret memoirs are usually composed. And if these

notes of Madame de Caylus, were to serve no other purpose than to banish such wretched stuff to the pastrycooks, they would answer one good end, at least, to every ingenuous mind.

+ [So far Monsieur de Voltaire's preface goes ; and I shall beg leave here to make one observation, upon the first paragraph of it. He and the Duke d'Antin join in complimenting Madame de Caylus, on the simplicity and naïveté of her relation ; and this stile has certainly its merits in narrative ; but I cannot, however, think that a few reflections, occasionally arising from the circumstances of the story, would have lessened them.

The

The French, in general, who are thought to excel in writings of mere amusement, are notwithstanding full of sentiment and deduction. History itself, though an higher and more noble species of study, is but a novel of events, without this primary part of literature, in which alone consists its use, and solely gives it the advantage over romance—as the inferences must be more conclusive, because the facts are more certain. +

Those who apply themselves to the study of history, may be supposed, indeed, capable of framing observations for themselves. They may therefore be the better dispensed with, in such writings. But they who bestow their leisure upon the reading of memoirs, anecdotes, +

dotes, or novels, are seldom those who are apt to make reflections. It may therefore be useful to drop a few of them, now-and-then, in their way.

+ There are readers, indeed, who are apt to be dissatisfied at such interruptions, because they retard the course of the story ; but surely there are others also, who, like *Atalanta*, would be content to *lose the race*, for the sake of picking up the *golden fruit*, by the way — which of these should an author write for !

+ Thus much I have thought necessary to say, upon this subject, lest my readers, on comparing this translation with the character that Monsieur de Voltaire has given of the original, might impute a false

false criticism to him, on account of the frequent liberties I have taken with my author, according to the manner of writing that I have above contended for.

However, I have not distinguished my own sentiments or observations, from the text, by any particular mark or note, being willing to suffer whatever merit there may be in them, to be imputed to my author, having been already sufficiently paid, in the amusement of writing, as every one should read—ever with reflection.

I hope, therefore, that such a reserve as this, may help to class me, in the favour of Monsieur de Voltaire, among the small number of those women he hints at, in the first paragraph of his preface, who

who *affect not a display of parts, upon every occasion.*

+ I shall not trouble the reader with a translation of the notes that were sent me along with the preface; as but few of them serve to clear up any difficulties in the text, that many of them are trifling, some seem to stand in need of notes themselves, and others are but *reflections* on the several passages they refer to. One of the latter, however, I shall give here, because it happens to concur with my opinion, about the *factitiousness* of Madame de Maintenon's character — that she was made up of *principles*—but had no *effusions*.

+ Upon her *almonary* or *mendicant* assembly, mentioned in page 79 of this volume,

volume, he has this expression: *charity, to be sure, is a very good thing—but Madame de Maintenon's left hand knew always too well what her right hand did.* This he speaks in derogation of her having appointed a *public day*, for such a purpose—

“ Who builds a church to God, and not to fame,
“ Will ne'er inscribe the marble with his name.”

But indeed, in general, there is, perhaps, rather more of ostentatious, than of concealed, charity, in the world. It is *ambi-dexter*—we give with *both hands*—scorning the restraint of scripture.

I wish, however, as Henry says, in the Series *, “ that there were more of

Vol. IV. page 6, and 7.

“ such

“ such characters in the world—persons
 “ who can give alms without charity;
 “ and be liberal without generosity—
 “ for *the outward and visible sign* is suf-
 “ ficient to all the purposes of this life
 “ —*the inward and spiritual grace* is
 “ the business of an other.”]

F I N I S.



